

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119, as well as receipt of certified copies of the documents upon which the claim for foreign priority is based. Applicants would also like to thank the Examiner for acknowledging consideration of each of the documents listed on the Form PTO-1449 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement on July 20, 2005.

In the outstanding Office Action, Figure 1 was objected-to as showing a character reference "41" not described in the specification. The specification was objected-to for perceived informalities at pages 3, 11, 18, 20 and 21. Claim 3 was objected-to for a perceived informality. Claims 3-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over ENDO et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,044,239). Claims 3 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 11005127. Claims 5-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over ENDO in view of JP 11005127. Claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 11005127 in view of ENDO.

Applicants traverse the outstanding objections to Figure 1 and the specification. Upon entry of the present amendment, paragraphs of the specification at pages 3, 9-10, 11, 18, 20 and 21 will have been amended. The herein-contained amendments to the specification address each of the outstanding objections to Figure 1 and the specification. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the outstanding objections to Figure 1 and the specification is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 3 and 7 will have been amended to advance prosecution and obtain early allowance of the pending claims.

Applicants traverse the objection to claim 3. Upon entry of the present amendment, the objection to claim 3 will have been rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claim 3 is respectfully requested.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 3-4 over ENDO and the rejection of claims 5-6 over ENDO in view of JP 11005127. Upon entry of the present amendment, claim 3 will recite:

A tapping device, comprising:
a tap holder, provided in a vertically movable shank body which can be freely attached to a rotating mold indexing device rotatably provided at a punch press, the tap holder having a tap at a lower end and being provided so as to be movable only in a vertical direction and urged upwards; and
a downward movement transmitter for receiving and transmitting downward motion of a ram provided at the punch press so as to be movable in the vertical direction to the tap holder, the downward movement transmitter being at an upper part of the shank body.

In this regard, as best understood, the rejection of claim 3 over ENDO appears to be premised on an interpretation of ENDO as follows:

- a turret punch press 1 in ENDO is interpreted as the claimed “punch press”
- a upper turret 5 in ENDO is interpreted as the claimed “rotating mold indexing device” rotatably provided at the punch press
- the punch holder 27 in ENDO is interpreted as the claimed “shank body” which can be freely attached to the “rotating mold indexing device”
- the punch bodies 37A, 37B in ENDO are interpreted as the claimed “tap holder” provided in the “shank body”
- shearing blade portions 49A, 49B in ENDO are interpreted as the claimed “tap” at the lower end of the “tap holder”
- ram 13 in ENDO is interpreted as the claimed “downward movement transmitter” and the “ram”.

However, an interpretation of ENDO as described above is incorrect. In this regard, a ram 13 in ENDO is not properly interpreted as a downward movement transmitter separate from the ram 13, and such an interpretation contradicts the requirement that a document must disclose “each and every” feature of a claim for the document to anticipate the claim under 35 U.S.C. §102. Nevertheless, upon entry of the present amendment, claim 3 will have been amended to recite that the downward movement transmitter both receives and transmits downward motion of the ram to further clarify that the downward movement transmitter is not itself the ram.

Further, a shearing blade portion 49A, 49B in ENDO is not properly interpreted as a tap. In this regard, one of ordinary skill in the art would not interpret a shearing blade portion 49A, 49B or any other feature in ENDO as the tap recited in the context of a tapping device in claim 3.

Accordingly, amended claim 3 is allowable over ENDO, at least for each of the reasons set forth above. Dependent claims 4-6 are allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim 3, as well as for additional reasons relating to their own recitations.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 3 and 7 over JP 11005127 and the rejection of claims 8-10 over JP 11005127 in view of ENDO. As noted above, upon entry of the present amendment, claim 3 will recite:

A tapping device, comprising:

a tap holder, provided in a vertically movable shank body which can be freely attached to a rotating mold indexing device rotatably provided at a punch press, the tap holder having a tap at a lower end and being provided so as to be movable only in a vertical direction and urged upwards; and

a downward movement transmitter for receiving and transmitting downward motion of a ram provided at the punch press so as to be movable in the vertical direction to the tap holder, the downward movement transmitter being at an upper part of the shank body.

Additionally, upon entry of the present amendment, claim 7 will recite:

7. (Currently Amended) A tapping device, comprising:

a tap holder provided in a vertically movable shank body which can be freely attached to a rotating mold indexing device rotatably provided at a punch press, the tap holder having a tap at a lower end and being provided so as to be movable only in a vertical direction and urged upwards; and

a downward movement transmitter for receiving and transmitting downward motion of a ram provided at the punch press so as to be movable in the vertical direction to the tap holder;

wherein the downward movement transmitter has a pressing device for pressing the tap holder downwards by fluid pressure supplied from the ram and a shock absorber.

Initially, Applicants note that an English language translation or Abstract of JP 11005127 was not provided with the Office Action. Nevertheless, a review of JP 11005127 reveals that JP 11005127 does not disclose any tap holder, any rotating mold indexing device, nor any shank body which is rotated together with the rotating mold indexing device. Rather, JP 11005127 merely discloses transmission of downward movement, in connection with which a punch portion 19 of the punch body 9 is moved vertically. However, even these teachings of the punch portion 19 reveal that the punch portion 19 is not rotated whatsoever. Therefore, JP 11005127 does not disclose any tap holder, any rotating mold indexing device, nor any shank body which is rotated together with the rotating mold indexing device. Accordingly, JP 11005127 does not disclose numerous of the features recited in independent claims 3 and 7.

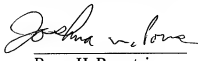
Accordingly, amended claims 3 and 7 are allowable over JP 11005127, at least for each of the reasons set forth above. Dependent claims 4-6 and 8-10 are allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim 3 or 7, as well as for additional reasons relating to their own recitations.

Any amendments which have been made in this Response, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have

been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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